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25 September 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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Tunisia: The Tunisian Foreign Ministry has expressed to Ambassador Walmsley its government's concern over additional conditions France is trying to impose before withdrawing its forces from positions outside the Bizerte base complex. The Tunisians complain that France is demanding a formal document legitimizing indefinite tenure at the base. Bourguiba admitted to Ambassador Walmsley on 12 September that he had offered France continued use of the base on 8 September for the "current dangerous period" in an attempt to break the impasse. He added that he needed "an equally constructive response" from De Gaulle "in a matter of weeks, not months," or his regime might not survive.

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Communist China - Mongolia - Japan: A Japanese Foreign Ministry mission is on its way to Mongolia to determine whether Japan should grant diplomatic recognition, but Peiping may be

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[Exerting pressure on Ulan Bator against establishing diplomatic relations with Tokyo. The Mongolian ambassador in Warsaw was described by a Japanese diplomat as "very agitated," when asked about Communist China's attitude. The Chinese probably want Mongolia to insist on the same stiff conditions of recognition that Peiping itself maintains, such as the prior severance of diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Last summer the Chinese Communists reportedly also made representations to Mongolia against allowing the establishment of a US embassy in Ulan Bator.]

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India: Despite considerable efforts to improve living conditions and logistics, the Indian Army continues to be plagued with morale problems along its remote northern frontiers. One infantry battalion--engaged in frontier duty for more than three years--reportedly mutinied on 14 September along the Kashmir cease-fire line with Pakistan, killing several of its officers. Another battalion had to be called in to quell the mutiny. Reports of low morale in frontier areas have recurred occasionally since mid-1960, when a Gurkha unit reportedly mutinied in Kashmir. India will continue to deploy its army to such generally inhospitable areas as long as its relations with Communist China and Pakistan remain in their present state.

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West Indies Federation: Trinidad's Premier Eric Williams, who recently resumed his public attitude of antagonism toward the United States, has emerged as the dominant West Indian leader as a result of Jamaica's decision to secede from the West Indies Federation. Williams' silence so far on the referendum result, plus his refusal to meet with Federation Prime Minister Adams prior to the latter's departure for London on 24 September, has strengthened the impression of US officials in Trinidad that Williams intends to seek Trinidad's independence as soon as possible.

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[A collapse of the Federation as now constituted offers no legal basis for preventing implementation of the defense areas]

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agreement concluded last February with the US. The American consul in Port of Spain believes, however, that Williams may try to renegotiate the agreement to obtain better terms for Trinidad.

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*Ghana: Nkrumah's displeasure over what he believes to be British policy in Africa probably accounts for the abruptness of his action in dismissing all British officers from command positions in Ghana's military forces. He had probably been contemplating the move for some time, however, as the British presence has increasingly been an obstacle to his plans to accept Soviet military assistance and to play a greater role in the "African high command" concept of the Casablanca powers. Nkrumah told a Western economic adviser on 21 September that he was convinced of British responsibility for Hammarskjold's death, as well as for the strikes plaguing Ghana. He expressed concern for his own safety, and said he intended to eliminate all foreigners serving in the Ghana government as soon as possible, and to tighten controls over all foreign businesses in the country. Nkrumah has invited British officers to remain in an advisory capacity, but such a change in their status would in any event facilitate the gradual introduction of Soviet military advisers.

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The Tunisian Situation

Ambassador Walmsley comments that the impasse now has been complicated by "the very dangerous factor" that Bourguiba may be proved wrong in having offered on 8 September--after his return from Belgrade--to seek settlement within the Western context. At that time Bourguiba made clear that he offered Paris use of the base for the duration of the Berlin crisis--which he considered would last only "a few weeks." Even the most loyal of Bourguiba's followers within his Neo-Destour party, however, are in no mood to wait indefinitely for proof that his pro-Western posture is correct.

Other sources report that more outspoken criticism of Bourguiba is being heard than at any other time since Tunisia obtained independence. If the impasse continues, Walmsley anticipates that Bourguiba will either have to withdraw his offer or face the grave threat to his regime of which he warned on 12 September.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman told Walmsley that talks were being carried on in Bizerte on the basis of the Tunisian note of 31 August, France's reply of 5 September, and Bourguiba's offer of 8 September. Agreement has been reached on an exchange of prisoners, which occurred on 10 September; on a mutual pull-back of both French and Tunisian forces; and on Tunisian guarantees that there would be no interference with communications between the various components of the base.

Early last week, the French consul general and the governor of Bizerte were authorized to work out the details and a schedule for the pull-back. The Tunisians were then confronted with a French draft proces-verbal making no reference to the notes of 31 August and 5 September but providing for Tunis to guarantee noninterference, to promise to permit no demonstrations, and to authorize French military personnel to circulate freely outside the base.

The Tunisian spokesman told Walmsley that demonstrations were a means of protesting the absence of negotiations, and that

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he feared the appearance of French uniforms might provoke incidents, with France holding his government responsible. Tunisia, therefore, considers such an "agreement" to legitimize both "servitudes and indefinite tenure at Bizerte" with no prospect--until Paris decides it is ready--of negotiations for either the temporary use of the base, as proffered by Bourguiba, or the reconversion of the base and a calendar for evacuation.

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West Indies Federation

Jamaica's unexpected call in the 19 September referendum for withdrawal from the West Indies Federation and its expected early move toward separate independence signify the dissolution of the Federation as constituted. The vote is a severe blow to Jamaican Premier Manley's prestige, for while he had not made it a matter of confidence, he had personally campaigned hard for approval of federation. As a result of opposition pressure, his cabinet is reported to have decided on 20 September to call elections before 31 May 1962, the date the Federation is scheduled to become independent.

British Colonial Office officials consider the Jamaican voters' decision final and believe they will soon be called on to work out the details of Jamaica's independence. Both Manley and opposition leader Bustamente are expected in London soon for discussions. While emphasizing that Trinidad's attitude is now crucial, British officials apparently see little hope that without Jamaica, the other nine units comprising the Federation can proceed to independence. They also believe it unlikely that Trinidad would join with the smaller islands in an eastern Caribbean federation. London seems to feel that the most likely prospect will involve Trinidad's decision to go it alone and that Britain will be left with three separate groups: Jamaica, Trinidad, and the smaller islands.

The smaller islands leaders' hope for an early lead from Trinidad Premier Williams, but US officials feel Williams will avoid taking a public position on the issue until after his country's elections scheduled for this fall. As the key figure now in the West Indies, he can afford to bide his time.

The collapse of the Federation also comes at a time when Williams has already been complaining that Trinidad was being slighted in the US-Federation Defense Areas Agreement of February 1961. Williams may now seize upon Jamaica's departure

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from the Federation as a pretext to denounce the base agreement, despite his commitment to it, in the hope of securing more favorable arrangements. In any event, his views will influence local attitudes toward the agreement even more than in the past, when he has often shown great hostility toward the United States.

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